

**GOLDER RANCH FIRE DISTRICT  
GOVERNING BOARD MEETING  
MEETING MINUTES**

**Tuesday, April 15, 2025, 9:00 a.m.  
1600 East Hanley Boulevard, Oro Valley, Arizona 85737**

**1. CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL**

Chairperson Cox Golder called the meeting to order on April 15, 2025, at 9:00 a.m.

Members Present: Chairperson Vicki Cox Golder, Vice-Chairperson Wally Vette, Board Clerk Sandra Outlaw, and Board Member Tom Shellenberger, and Board Member Steve Brady

Staff Present: Fire Chief Tom Brandhuber, Assistant Chief Grissom, Assistant Chief Perry, Assistant Chief Cesarek, Deputy Chief Rutherford, Deputy Chief Hilderbrand, Deputy Chief Wilson, Deputy Chief Jarrold, Fire Marshal Akins, Finance Director Christian, IT Director Rascon, HR Director Delong, Battalion Chief Hastings, Media and Community Relations Supervisor Camarillo, and Board Services Supervisor Ortiz

**2. SALUTE AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Those in attendance said the pledge of allegiance.

**3. FIRE BOARD REPORTS**

Vice Chairperson Vette reported he, Board Member Brady and Board Member Shellenberger attended the Arizona Fire District's Association (AFDA) statutorily required class at Drexel Heights Fire District.

Board Member Shellenberger said he learned some new things he thought he knew, so it was a good refresher. He said it was a good class.

Board Member Brady said he missed Donna teaching the class. He said at the class they spoke about what other fire districts have done wrong. He said GRFD does a good job abiding the law and hopes everyone continues to do so.

Board Member Outlaw said she attended the Chamber breakfast. At the ceremony outstanding businesses in the community were recognized. She thanked Supervisor Camarillo for her support of the Chamber. She was grateful for the invitation.



#### **4. CALL TO THE PUBLIC**

There were no public issues presented at this time.

#### **5. PRESENTATIONS**

##### **A. PRESENTATION OF PERSONNEL**

- YEARS OF SERVICE
  - ADIN de MASI, CAPTAIN-15 YEARS
  - JOHNNY MILLER, ENGINEER- 15 YEARS
  - JEREMY RINDER, CAPTAIN- 15 YEARS

Captain de Masi was presented by DC Taylor for his fifteen years of service.

Engineer Miller was presented by BC Hastings for his fifteen years of service.

Captain Rinder was presented by BC Hastings for his fifteen years of service.

Captain Rinder said Fire Marshal Akins was also in the class of 2010. He recognized her for her knowledge of her position, professional conduct and accomplishments at the District.

##### **B. PRESENTATION OF THE COMMUNITY RESOURCE TECHNICIAN (CRT) PROGRAM**

Deputy Chief Hilderbrand gave a presentation on the Community Resource Technician (CRT) program. He wanted to give the Board an update on the status of the program. He explained before the CRT program, crews would respond to a non-emergent call with all four people crew members on an engine. If the crew was responding to a public assist call and were dispatched to an emergent call, it sometimes affected the response time. Also, if crews were training, they would have to respond to the public assist call and return to training or sometimes not return to the training at all. In light of these issues, there were some areas Community Risk Reduction (CRR) was hoping to improve upon.

Deputy Chief Hilderbrand explained CRR is tasked with the prevention of harm, which includes building strategies to make the community safe, healthy, and resilient. One of the strategies CRR wanted to consider was optional response models for suppression crews. In 2024 GRFD received 6,049 public assist calls. CRR's solution was the Community Resource Technician (CRT) program. The trial of the program began with two CRTs on an F250 assigned to the north battalion. This area is north of Station 374, including Sun City, Catalina, SaddleBrooke and SaddleBrooke Ranch. Seven people were initially hired. With that, the District was able to staff 2 CRTs per truck per day. There were days when there was not enough staffing for every day. The purpose of the program was to respond quicker to public assist calls, ease the call load of suppression, and do this in a cost-effective way that still meets the goal of Golder Ranch Fire District's culture. Additional tasks have been and will



be assigned to CRTs including lock boxes and eventually home safety inspections. Deputy Chief Hilderbrand provided statistics for the two months the CRTs responded to public assist calls: Calls- 143, Smoke alarms-129, Snakes-14, Scheduled smoke alarms (Sun City Vistoso project) 184, Hours responding to calls 63.5 and Miles driven-2,710. He highlighted the fact that the 63.5 hours CRTs responded to calls was time suppression had to respond to emergent calls. He explained and showed charts on cost savings on personnel and fuel during the two-month period as well as a projected one-year timeline based on the current call load. The benefits of the CRT program include the cost savings of personnel and fuel, improved crew availability, decreased apparatus wear and tear, and increased savings if both battalions are served by CRTs.

Board Member Shellenberger asked how the 311 program was working, if it will be implemented in the south battalion and how many calls they are receiving.

Assistant Chief Perry responded 311 was implemented. When someone in the District calls 911 for a service call, such as picking up snakes or changing the batteries in a smoke alarm, dispatch transfers the caller to 311. Approximately 293 calls have been received by 311 to-date. As of May 5<sup>th</sup>, the hope is to go direct to a 311 call. When people have non-emergent calls they can call 311 directly. The hope is to take a large portion of calls out of the 911 system.

Board Member Brady asked when the CRTs will respond in south battalion.

Deputy Chief Hilderbrand answered his division had a scheduled meeting with Human Resources to keep enrollment open for CRT positions. The number of people hired and the staffing levels will determine if CRTs will be available to respond in the south battalion.

Assistant Chief Perry explained the CRT program is a pilot program right now. As budget discussions take place, there will be a proposal for the CRT program and expansion of it. It will be a discussion for next fiscal year.

Board Member Brady said he didn't believe the Board would have a problem with it because of the savings it provides the District and it makes the crews more available for emergent calls. He said it belongs in the budget and the Board will take care of it.

## **6. CONSENT AGENDA**

- A. APPROVE MINUTES- MARCH 18, 2025, REGULAR SESSION
- B. APPROVE AND ADOPT THE BACKUP AMBULANCE COVERAGE INTERGOVERNMENTAL AGREEMENT BETWEEN NORTHWEST FIRE DISTRICT AND GOLDER RANCH FIRE DISTRICT



**MOTION** by Board Member Brady to approve the April 15, 2025, Consent Agenda.  
**MOTION SECONDED** by Vice Chairperson Vette  
**MOTION CARRIED 5/0**

## **7. REPORTS AND CORRESPONDENCE**

- A. **FIRE CHIEF'S REPORT** – Chief Brandhuber presented the Fire Chief's report to the Governing Board. He said President Jones apologized he could not attend the meeting. Chief Brandhuber said the Board Members mentioned the open meeting law class they attended, he thanked Attorney Aversa and Board Services Supervisor Ortiz for their support in following the Open Meeting Law at board meetings.

Chairperson Cox Golder said she read in the report that Chief Brandhuber met with the three assistant chiefs, she asked how the meeting went.

Chief Brandhuber replied he and the three assistant chiefs met. with DFFM (Department of Forestry and Fire Management). They discussed plans for the future, there were no short term projects identified. He said he thought the meeting went well.

Chairperson Cox Golder stated she read the Operations report and noticed a high number of canceled calls. She asked if the District keeps track of canceled calls.

Assistant Chief Grissom responded his division does keep a close eye on calls dispatched that are responded to. When someone calls 911, crews respond. It is the crews' job to mitigate the issue whether it is an emergency or non-emergency. He didn't think there was much the District could do about it (canceled calls) because it is on dispatch's end. As of right now, he didn't believe it was that much of a burden on operations.

Board Clerk Outlaw said she noticed Chief Brandhuber met with Oro Valley Hospital. She asked how the meeting went.

Fire Chief Brandhuber responded it was a productive meeting, they had discussions that included the EMS staff. The hospital has increased their staffing and put a call tree list in place before decisions are made. Some of the times they were listed as divert status they truly were not on divert. He said it was a good meeting, he expressed his appreciation for the meeting and the commitment to work together. He believed through clear communication and more alignment with the hospital he didn't believe the District saw any issues since then.

Board Member Shellenberger asked that acronyms in board reports be spelled out.

Chief Brandhuber said he will make sure to do that moving forward.



- B. COMMUNITY RISK REDUCTION DIVISION'S REPORT Assistant Chief Perry presented Community Risk Reduction's division report to the Governing Board.
- C. SUPPORT SERVICES DIVISION'S REPORT - Assistant Chief Cesarek presented the Support Services' division report to the Governing Board. He stated he wanted to highlight a few things in the Fleet division. He said three individuals went to Texas for emergency vehicle training and regional exposure. Fleet hosted a hydraulics class on campus for mechanics from around the State. They have been going above and beyond. They maintain their certifications but they also make an effort to learn the newest and greatest things to maintain district vehicles. Lastly, Station 378 is getting near completion. They will do a walk through and complete any items before a grand opening is scheduled for the building.

Chairperson Cox Golder asked what the MD Ally Program was.

Media and Public Relations Supervisor Camarillo answered the MD Ally Program was a partnership with Northwest Fire District (NWFD) and the City of Tucson Communications Center where when someone, with a medical need, calls 911 for a call that does not require an immediate response from emergency personnel, the caller gets a telehealth option to speak to a telehealth doctor. A press conference was held with NWFD and the City of Tucson. The City began the program first, the began it with the City of Tucson Fire Department (TFD).

Vice Chairperson Vette said he read in the Facilities Maintenance report, it listed % of facilities that don't experience equipment failure is 6.6%.

Assistant Chief Cesarek replied Facilities began to track % of equipment failure in the new performance measures.

Assistant Chief Cesarek said if they need to adjust the language to properly report items, they can.

- D. EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES & FIRE RESPONSE DIVISION'S REPORT - Assistant Chief Grissom presented the EMS & Fire Response's division report to the Governing Board.

Assistant Chief Grissom said a fire officer class is taking place for aspiring candidates. A promotional process will take place soon afterwards. He recognized 377 C Shift, a special operations crew, who performed an extremely difficult cave rescue with PCSO (Pima County Sheriff's Office) on the back side of Mount Lemmon. The conditions were fierce but the crew did an incredible job rescuing the person from the cave.

Vice Chairperson Vette asked what Utstein Formula of Survival was.



Deputy Chief Taylor said the Utstein survivability score is for all of the out-of-hospital cardiac arrests they sort them into different categories. The score is based on if it was out-of-hospital, bystander CPR was provided, there was return of spontaneous circulation. The score seems low but TFD (Tucson Fire Department) just received a score of 8%. A couple of years ago Golder Ranch Fire District (GRFD) had a score of 37% which was the second highest in the state. The District's score is a little lower now but it is because skilled nursing facilities were moved and the score was lowered because of it.

Board Member Shellenberger asked what a balloon time was.

Deputy Chief Taylor answered balloon time is anytime someone needs to go to the cath lab, usually it is a STEMI, heart attack with a specific blockage. The patient will go to the cath lab, get it opened to restore blood flow. They use a device that is inserted in the coronary artery and inflates it. They inflate the balloon and it restores circulation, this is a very important time for their performance as a hospital and the crews time as the District.

Vice Chairperson Vette asked Assistant Chief Grissom what the plan was to improve the 58% budget variance.

Chief Grissom asked what line item this pertained to.

Vice Chairperson Vette said the Fire and EMS Report stated 58% budget variance.

They agreed to discuss it after the meeting.

Chief Brandhuber added, one thing thing to keep in mind is the average age of the population. As a person's age gets higher the survivability rate goes down.

## **8. REGULAR BUSINESS**

- A. EXECUTIVE SESSION: THE BOARD MAY VOTE TO GO INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION PURSUANT TO A.R.S. §38-431.03.A(1) FOR THE PURPOSE OF DISCUSSION AND CONSIDERATION OF FIRE CHIEF BRANDHUBER'S EMPLOYMENT INCLUDING ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REVIEW

NOTE: THE CHAIRPERSON WILL CONFIRM CHIEF BRANDHUBER RECEIVED NOT LESS THAN 24 HOURS WRITTEN NOTICE OF THE EXECUTIVE SESSION

**MOTION** by Board Member Brady to enter into executive session.

**SECONDED** by Vice-Chairperson Vette

**MOTION CARRIED 5/0**

The Governing Board entered into executive session at 9:45 a.m.



Those who entered into executive session included the Governing Board, HR Director Delong, Board Services Supervisor Ortiz and Attorney Aversa.

Fire Chief Tom Brandhuber confirmed he received the 24-hour notice of executive session.

- B. EXECUTIVE SESSION: THE BOARD MAY VOTE TO GO INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION PURSUANT TO A.R.S. §38-431.03.A(3) FOR THE PURPOSE OF DISCUSSION AND CONSIDERATION FOR LEGAL ADVICE WITH THE ATTORNEY FOR THE DISTRICT REGARDING THE FIRE CHIEF'S CONTRACT  
NOTE: EXECUTIVE SESSIONS ARE CONFIDENTIAL PURSUANT TO A.R.S. §38-431.03.C.

The Governing Board resumed regular session at 9:59 a.m.

- C. DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION REGARDING THE GOLDER RANCH FIRE DISTRICT RECONCILIATION AND MONTHLY FINANCIAL REPORT

Finance Director Christian presented a summary of the financial reports to the Governing Board. He stated March marks the end of the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter of the fiscal year. Director Christian explained this is the time where the District takes inventory where it is financially. The good news is revenues are on track with what was budgeted. Month-to-date, miscellaneous revenue earned \$127, 945, this was a combination of over \$80,000 earned in wildland revenue and over \$20,000 earned by Fire Prevention in permit fees. Health insurance and medical screening both ran slightly over budget. The District is currently 2% favorable in revenue and 6% favorable in expenses. Year-to-date the District is 5% favorable in revenues and 2% favorable in expenses. The total cash balance is \$28 million, \$8 million is restricted bond funding. In reference to ambulance billing the District has completed a record 5,500 transports. There have been three wildland fires responded to, billed and received.

**MOTION** by Vice Chairperson Vette to approve and accept the Golder Ranch Fire District reconciliation and monthly financial report as presented.

**MOTION SECONDED** by Board Member Outlaw

**MOTION CARRIED 5/0**

## **9. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

The next regularly scheduled meeting will be May 20, 2025.

Vice Chairperson Vette said looking back, the District has done a wonderful job in not only taking care of the community but in helping others. Coming up later this month, something that Board Services Supervisor Ortiz is going to do is reach out and help other districts with the administrative process. IT reaches out to other districts, the Fire Marshal's office does, everyone reaches out. He said the District does a good job. He congratulated everyone for doing this.



**10. CALL TO THE PUBLIC**

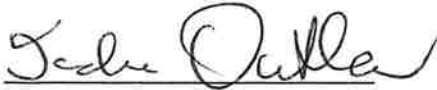
There were no public issues presented at this time.

**11. ADJOURNMENT**

**MOTION** by Board Member Brady to adjourn the meeting at 10:10 a.m.

**MOTION SECONDED** by Board Clerk Outlaw

**MOTION CARRIED** 5/0



Sandra Outlaw, Clerk of the Board  
Golder Ranch Fire District

